

CENTER FOR ADVANCED STUDY IN THE BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES
202 Junipero Serra Boulevard
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CENTER PROGRAM ON SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIETY

The scholar of today does his work in an environment of anxiety about the relationship of science and technology to social aims and processes. The natural scientist is under sharp challenges to justify social investment in scientific education and research. Some of his critics attack science head on as an ideological and technological instrument of "dehumanization." Responsible policy makers must seek means by which to optimize the human welfare benefits that may be derived from scientific advance, and to avert or neutralize potentially catastrophic side effects of mismanaged technology described in such cliches as ecocatastrophe, nuclear Armageddon, the population explosion, and genocidal repression of the Third World.

The moral dilemmas that would face the humane natural scientist engaged in a rigorous methodology that seeks to minimize bias from the "human equation," were anticipated many years ago by Robert K. Merton in his writings on the sociology of science. The subject was again brought to public attention, in somewhat different form, by C. P. Snow writing on "The Two Cultures." Within the past decade, shrill polemics about science and society have become no small part of the dissonance of contemporary life, affecting the morale and funding of scientists, students' choice of careers, and the whole fabric of a technology-dependent civilization.

Behavioral scientists are also challenged. Their skills and discipline will be required if we are to have an orderly and productive analysis of the underlying issues. Their efforts would be made more effective by intimate communication with natural scientists, many of whom are now deeply motivated by their personal anxieties about the long-range survival of objective scientific inquiry.

A number of universities have attempted to mount interdisciplinary programs to deal with similar issues. It may be questioned whether these have yet been sufficiently well organized and comprehensive to permit a reasonably well defined inter-discipline to flourish and sustain itself within the context of a departmental framework. To many of us it would appear more important to tap the wisdom and specific disciplinary insight of a larger number of people representing a wide diversity of fields, a group of which again the Center Fellows would be a prototype. To that end the Center is organizing a loosely structured, experimental PROGRAM ON SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIETY consistent with the long established traditions of the Center. This program has received financial support from the National Science Foundation effective September 1971. However, we are planning a

cautious buildup of momentum over the first two years, a time during which more detailed operational plans will be crystallized in the light of cumulative experience and advice.

The proposed encouragement in this program of a specific collaborative intellectual effort is closely related to various groups that have worked at the Center in the past, such as the Primate group in 1962-63, the Psycholinguistics group in 1964-65, and the group on Cognitive Consistency Theories in 1965-66. Any future collaborative efforts should not interfere with or supplant the role of the Center as a haven for the individual scholar who is concerned primarily, or exclusively, with his own solitary scholarly program.

Several different possibilities are envisaged:

1) Each year one or a few core projects will be identified for intensive exploration. In some instances these will have been planned in advance by the Advisory Council, in consultation with present and anticipated Fellows. For 1971-72 one such project is already under way, organized by Lindzey, Loehlin and Spuhler. Their work is related to the general problem of "Biological Diversity and Social Equity." More specifically they will be concerned with a number of current controversies relating to classification by ability, the biological and environmental determinants of intelligence and their implications for public policy. Other core projects may well emerge during the next few months under the impetus of the newfound commonalities of interest among Fellows. Needless to say, there will be an opportunity for interested Fellows to participate in the core project(s) if they wish.

2) Many Fellows who have well established personal plans for their year's work may still wish to devote some portion of their time to broader discussions, from the vantage point of their own disciplinary expertise, relating to science, technology and society. No Fellow should feel shy about volunteering such a contribution from a platform of commitment or of experience that may not be evident to us.

3) Continuity for this program from one year to the next, and between the Center and other institutions in the vicinity, will be furthered by the continuous attention and occasional intercession of the Advisory Council to the program, and by the participation of Stanford Professors Joshua Lederberg of the Genetics Department, David Hamburg of the Psychiatry Department and Sidney Drell of the Physics Department in the organization of seminars and the development of other programs designed to strengthen or facilitate inquiry and intellectual exchange with other scholars at Stanford and other nearby universities.

4) Another activity now under discussion in connection with the PROGRAM ON SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIETY is the sponsorship of one or more workshops including delegates from other institutions. These will be planned so as to avoid interference with the ordinary rhythm of the Center's activities.

Please do not hesitate to direct questions or advice to any of the advisors to this program. To the extent that the roster of Fellows wishes to contribute to our activities, we look to it as the most cogent source of constructive criticism that could be found anywhere. The present members of the Advisory Council are:

Kenneth Arrow, Economics, Harvard University
Lewis M. Branscomb, National Bureau of Standards
David Hamburg, Psychiatry, Stanford University
Caryl Haskins, Biology, President Emeritus, Carnegie Institute
of Washington
Joshua Lederberg, Genetics, Stanford University
Robert Merton, Sociology, Columbia University
Meredith Wilson, Director, Center for Advanced Study in the
Behavioral Sciences

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Meredith Wilson".

O. Meredith Wilson, Director

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September 9, 1971